

The Mayor and Council of Hurlock

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COUNCIL MEMBERS
CHARLES T. CEPHAS, SR.
PARKER J. DURHAM
BONNIE FRANZ
EARL H. MURPHY
JERRY L. RHUE, SR.

MINUTES OPEN SESSION MEETING April 13, 2015 6:00 P.M.

Mayor Spratt called the meeting of April 13, 2015, to order at 6:00 p.m. in the Hurlock Town Office located at 311 Charles Street. Following the Pledge of Allegiance former Councilman Christopher Adams said the opening prayer. At that time, Councilman Parker Durham resigned his position as Hurlock Town Councilman, effective immediately. The resignation was due to the sale of his property in Hurlock. Mayor Spratt thanked him for everything he has done while serving on the Town Council. The roll call was then taken. Those in attendance were Council members, Jerry Rhue, Bonnie Franz, Charles Cephas, Earl Murphy, Attorney Robert Merriken, Mayor Joyce Spratt, and Administrator John Avery.

Councilman Rhue made a Motion to approve the Agenda. Council woman Franz seconded the Motion. With no discussion and no one opposed, the Motion to approve the agenda was passed and carried with a vote of 4-0.

The minutes of the March 9, 2015 meeting were approved as read. Councilman Murphy made a Motion to approve the minutes. Councilwoman Franz seconded the Motion. With all in favor and no one opposed, the Motion to Approve was passed and carried with a vote of 4-0.

The minutes of the March 23, 2015 meeting were approved as read. Councilman Rhue made a Motion to approve the minutes. Councilwoman Franz seconded the Motion. With all in favor and no one opposed, the Motion was passed and carried with a vote of 4-0.

County Councilman Rick Price Report – Councilman Rick Price reported from the last Dorchester County Council meeting. He spoke of a camp being added in resource conservation for groups that are non-profit to get young lives started. A grant was approved for items needed for the Tech Park. State Highway Administration will receive a follow-up letter regarding road issues in the County. An application for funds for a vertical expansion of the land fill was approved. Phase 1 of a housing study is being completed (Please see attached). Councilman Price explained Phase 1 and asked if anyone wished to volunteer to call 410-228-1700 ext. 104.

to help determine housing needs. The budget hearing will be held May 5th and again on May 12th. Dr. Kaye McElvey has been working to help bring in a community center. More discussion ensued on the housing matter.

Mayor Spratt asked Councilman Price why he voted against building the new North Dorchester High School. Mr. Price replied that funding was the issue and he did not want to raise taxes in the county. He is not against the new school. There was considerable discussion regarding support of the new high school.

Councilman Murphy asked County Councilman Price if he had looked into ways to occupy vacant houses. Councilman Price's answer was no he has not looked into that matter.

Mayor's Report - Mayor Spratt stated that Councilman Rhue abstained from voting on the March 9, 2015 minutes because he was absent from that meeting.

The Mayor read a letter from the Hurlock Fire Company thanking the Mayor & Council for hosting the fire company's banquet.

Mayor Spratt reported that Rt 392 will be repaved from Palmers Mill Road to the Rail Crossing at the grainery.

Clean up day will be held on April 25th. Citizens can call the town office to have their brush picked up.

Ground breaking for the solar project at the waste water treatment plant will be held on April 25th at 1:00 p.m.

Mayor Spratt addressed the Natural Gas issue. She stated that in 2010 the Town began working on bringing Natural Gas into the Town of Hurlock. She said she has been accused of not wanting it; however she has always been in favor of having Natural Gas in the Town. Over 700 survey letters were sent out to residents regarding the Natural Gas issue. Mayor Spratt reiterated that she is totally in favor of the Town having Natural Gas.

Department Reports –

Police Department - There were 1026 calls for service. Councilman Cephas thanked the police department for doing such a fine job. He further stated that the Mayor & Council have given all their support to Chief of Police Les Hutton and his wife as she battles cancer.

Fire Company - Councilman Rhue presented a report from the fire company. The company has received a new Cardiac Monitor. There have been over 100 calls this year so far.

Mayor Spratt stated the street sweeper is being repaired and asked residents to please not throw their grass in the street.

Public Comment - Mr. Frank Bittner announced that Gillespie's Church would like to have an option to have Natural Gas. As a church, they would save money and be ecologically friendly.

They could save from 30 to 40 % over oil. The conversion costs could be recouped within one year.

Michelle Seretis stated that Pizza Palace would like to have Natural Gas. She read a cover letter from Chesapeake Utilities.

Mayor Spratt said Chesapeake would be at the Town meeting on April 27th.

Chris Adams stated that he did not have an active business, but has 4 homes and would use Natural Gas. When he was on the Council he asked for updating the Town's infrastructure. He further stated that strong support from Town residents would be a big plus.

Mr. Muhammad from the Stop Shop Convenience Store said businesses need to save money any way they can

Mr. Frank Bittner spoke again stating that there are many public utility companies. Chesapeake Utilities is one of the top money making utility companys. He feels the residents have a right to have Natural Gas, but doesn't think Chesapeake Utilities will service the Town residents. There was more discussion regarding the savings that Natural Gas can create for heating, how the Town offered businesses \$2,000.00 to clean up their businesses and if this could be done to help with installation costs. Rev. Bovankovich feels the Town needs to have a vision and to look to the future.

Councilman Murphy stated that a franchise agreement was done as an incentive to have more Natural Gas within the Town. The Town does have a good vision of the future.

Mayor Spratt said she will write a letter asking for Natural Gas. if the Council agrees.

Councilman Cephas felt Mayor Spratt would be doing the right thing. Attorney Merriken stated a Motion is not needed to send a letter to Chesapeake Utilities. Councilman Murphy felt a Motion should be made to impress on Chesapeake Utilities the importance of Natural Gas for the business district. Councilman Murphy made a Motion for Mayor Spratt to write a letter to Chesapeake Utilities. Councilman Cephas seconded the Motion. With all in favor and no one opposed, the Motion was passed and carried with a vote of 4-0.

Old Business – Attorney Merriken explained the Planning Commission Meeting was held on April 9, 2015. The Planning Commission forwarded its favorable recommendation to the Mayor & Council to rezone 206 & 210 S. Main to C-2 and combine the 3 lots on Main Street; 206, 208, and 210, into one lot. Oxford Chase asked for a hearing. That information is all that is needed to hold a hearing on the rezoning. Councilman Cephas made a Motion that a hearing be held regarding the rezoning of the 3 properties. Councilman Murphy seconded the Motion. With all in favor and no one opposed, the Motion was passed and carried with a vote of 4-0. The hearing will be held on Tuesday May 26th at 6:00 p.m.

Council members Comments – Mayor Spratt announced a fund raiser is being held for Les and JoAnn Hutton. Mrs. Hutton has pancreatic and liver cancer.

Councilwoman Franz said it was nice working with Parker Durham.

Councilman Murphy stated he wished there were more involvement with the residents.

A question was asked regarding what would be done with all the houses that should be demolished. Councilman Cephas responded that the Town is working on it with community grants. He said he would like to see more citizen involvement.

There were questions on vacant properties and a suggestion was made to be like Baltimore where a resident would buy a house for \$1 and be given a year to fix it up.

Reverend Bovankovich thanked everyone on the Council for all that has been done in the Town. He asked about Waterland Fisheries. Attorney Merriken responded about the negotiations that are on going. There were more questions and Attorney Merriken replied that the Mayor & Council would be going into a closed session meeting after this meeting was adjourned.

Ms. Lynn Vinson spoke about a problem with a dog and how well the police handled the situation.

A basket of Hugs & Kisses was presented to the Chief for a thank you.

Mr. Paul Grahe spoke about the North Dorchester High School and that he is very interested in it. He said there were many people at the 1st meeting and if possible there needs to be more people in support of the new high school at the County Council meeting.

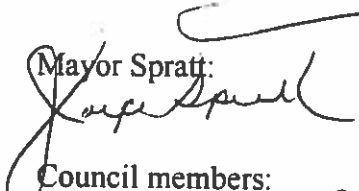
Council man Cephas announced that Mr. Monroe Quailes' daughter is in the hospital terminally ill.

Councilman Murphy made a Motion for the Mayor & Council to go to a closed session meeting. Councilman Rhue seconded the Motion. With all in favor and no one opposed, the Motion was passed and carried with a vote of 4-0. The purpose of the meeting is to aquire legal advice regarding outstanding sewer bills from Waterland Fisheries, potential litigation and settlement agreement. It was announced that they would not be returning to open session.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:58 p.m.

Approved: Respectively submitted,


John Avery
Clerk/Treasurer


Mayor Spratt:

Council members:

Rev. Charles A. Affan

Earl Murphy

Bonnie E. Henry
Jerry L. Rhue Sr.